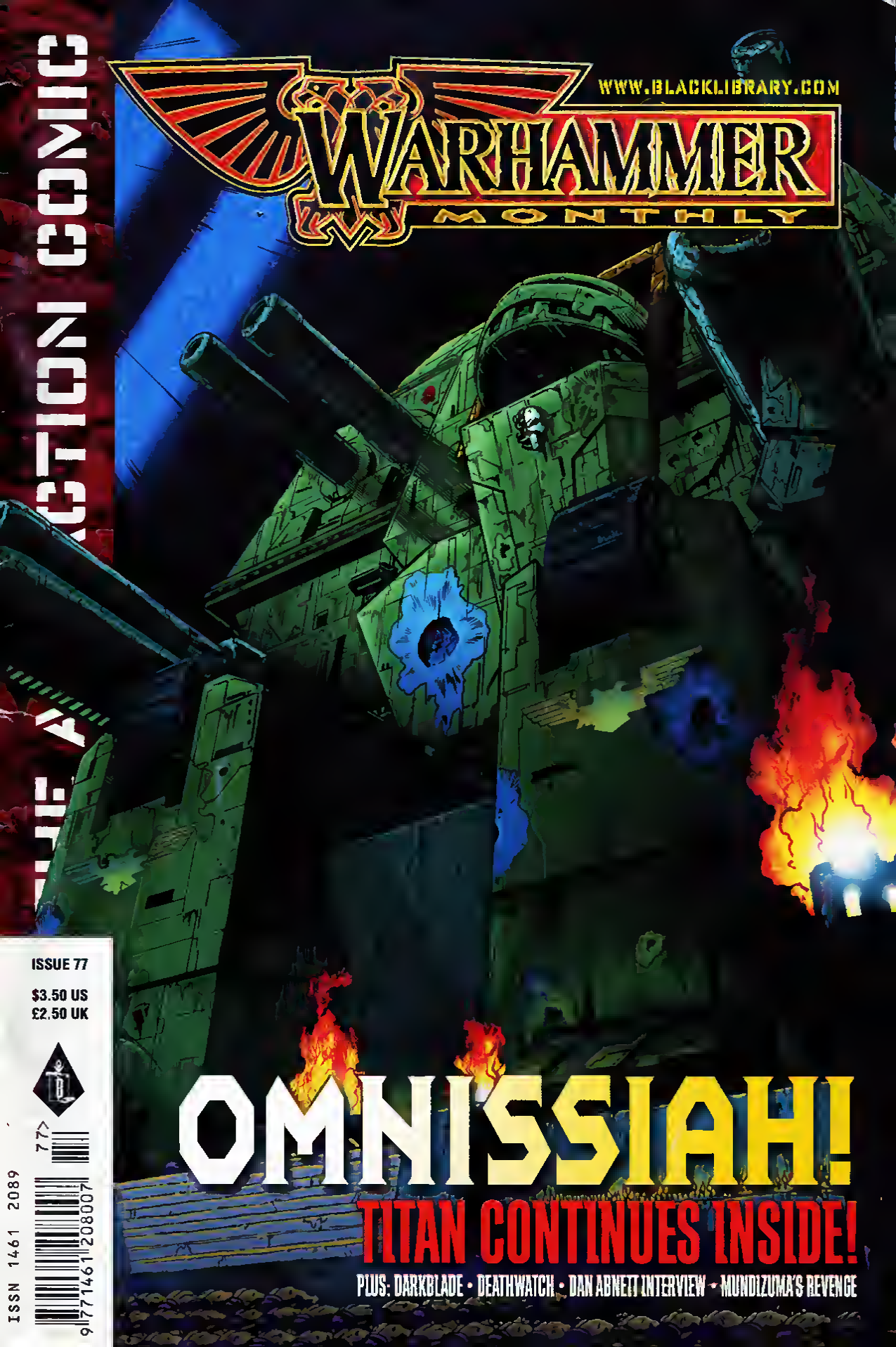
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OMNISSIAH!
TITAN CONTINUES INSIDE!
PLUS: DARKBLADE • DEATHWATCH • DAN ABNETT INTERVIEW • MUNDIZUMA'S REVENGE

CONTENTS

TITAN Thrust through the reality bending Warp, the crew of the Imperius Dictatio find themselves trapped on a bizarre alien world. *(For the full Titan back story visit www.blacklibrary.com/titan)*

Script: Dan Abnett Art: Anthony Williams Letters: Fiona Stephenson

DARKBLADE Darkblade has returned! At the head of a great army, and under a banner of blood, he rides forth into the lands of Ulthuan. He brings war, but will fate bring victory?

Script: Dan Abnett Art: Kev Hopgood (For the Darkblade back story visit www.blacklibrary.com/darkblade)

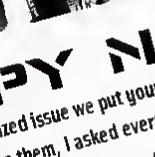
CLONE OF BLOOD With the brilliant Darkblade IV and Titan: Omnissiah running in the comic, we thought a chat with the creator, Dan Abnett, was nigh on essential. Read the words of clone number one!

MUNDIZUMA'S REVENGE There's only one problem with ancient prophecies they're not always what they seem!

Script: Stu Taylar • Art: Mike Collins Letters: Fiona Stephenson

DEATHWATCH Drawn from the elite of the mighty Adeptus Astartes, the Deathwatch are truly humanity's finest!

Script: Jim Alexander • Pencils: Graham Stoddart Ink: Lee Townsend Letters: Fiona Stephenson



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I hope you've all recovered from your Hogmanay celebrations and the awesome giant-sized issue we put your way for Christmas. By the time you read this I'm sure you'll have all broken your New Year's resolutions but, to make sure that they stick to them, I asked everybody in the Black Library office what their resolutions are/were. Here are the answers I got.

Marc: I resolve to keep killing everyone's favourite characters, all the time. There's a war on, you know!

Matt: After considerable thought I have decided to become more spontaneous.

Darius: To devote more time to cultivating my facial hair – especially the thick furry bits in my ears, and to help those less folically fortunate than myself.

Dan: To develop mutant super powers and/or become a Jedi, so I can seize control of the world and rule with an iron fist.

Christian: Not to write editorials at the last minute!

See you next issue. CD

Warhammer Monthly deffied issue 77, January 2004

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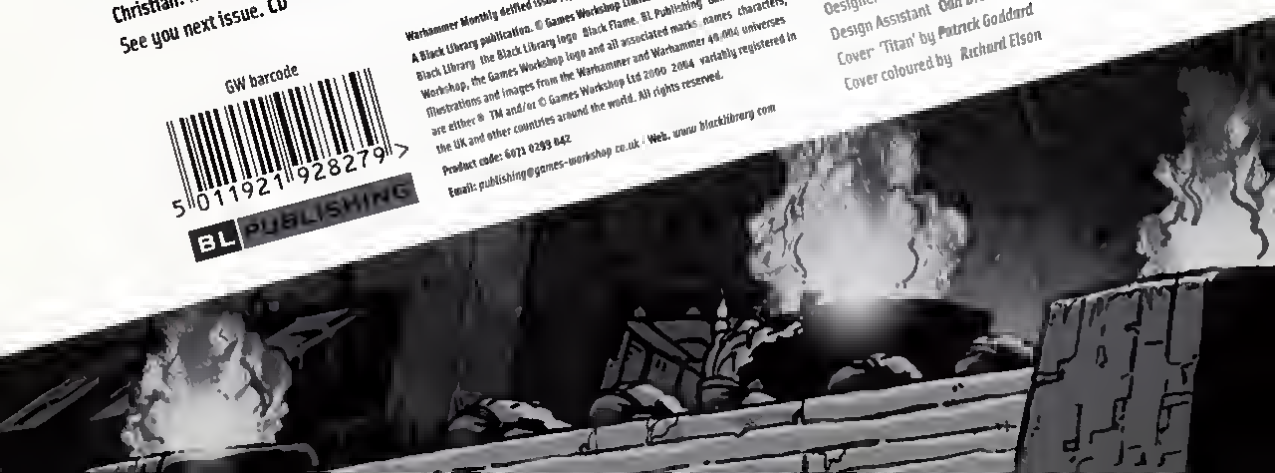


TITAN

OMNISSIAH

PART SEVEN

IF WE COULD GET THAT CAGE OPEN, AND IF WE COULD OVERPOWER THE GUARDS WITHOUT WEAPONS, AND IF WE COULD THEN FIGHT OUR WAY OUT OF A CITY FULL OF CHAOS-SPAWN SUBHUMANS...
...WE'D STILL BE STRANDED ON A HELL-WORLD FROM NOWHERE WITH ZERO HOPE OF SURVIVAL.

STORY: DAN ABNETT • ART ANTHONY WILLIAMS • LETTERS: FIONA STEPHENSON

HEY...
WHAT'S THIS NOW?!
KHRR..?
ABAK! KU TEH?
NN-KOW!
SKOW!
SKOW!
AKH!

ZYGO?
GO ON, LAD!
ZZKOW!
SKOW!
ZZKOW KOW!
ZYGO! OVER HERE!
ZZ-KOW
STAND BACK
KOW!
TPANG!

KLANG-KLANG-KLANG-KLANG!
SHKOW!
ZZAK!
ZU-TEH! ABAK! ZWEH! ZWEH!
HERE! HURRY!
YOU'LL NEED THESE.
I'M FEELING A LITTLE MORE POSITIVE NOW, DORN.
GOOD TO KNOW.
ZZKOW!
CHOOM! TA M TA M!
OPEN THE OTHER CAGES! GET THE REST OF THE MEN FREE!

HOW MANY WE GOT?
THIRTY NINE ALL TOLD, SOME SICK.
WHAT DO WE DO NOW? FIGHT OUR WAY OUT OF THE CITY?
NO. WE HEAD FOR THE MAIN TEMPLE.
WHY?
BECAUSE OICTATIO IS THERE, INTACT.
RIGHT— THIS WAY'S GOING TO GET BLOODY.
LET'S HEAD BACK. SEE IF THERE'S ANOTHER WAY OUT OF THE BUILDING.
FINE. LET'S TRY THIS WAY.
ZU-TEH!
NNNKRAK!
GOD-EMPEROR. THE PLACE IS SWARMING WITH THEM.

THERE'S SOMETHING A WAY OUT, MAYBE
WHAT'S THAT NOISE..?
THRONE! SOUNDS LIKE SOME KIND OF ANIMAL!
GRRRRR! GRAAAHH!
UP THERE! LOOK!
GRRURGHH!
ROOAWLL!
MERCY OF TERRA! POOR BASTARD'S GONE FERAL...

LEAVE HIM. WE'VE GOT M-
NO, DORN. LOOK. LOOK, FOR EMPEROR'S SAKE...
GRAAA

Darkblade

Book IV: Banner of Blood
Part Four

Script:
Dan Abnett
Art:
Kev Hopgood

MORNAS IDRION LOOKS OUT FROM THE RAMPARTS OF THE DRAGON GATE AND SEES ***DOOM*** SPLIT THE MORNING MISTS.

THE PHOENIX KING *HIMSELF* MADE MORNAS IDRION COMMANDER OF THE DRAGON GATE GARRISON.
NO ITHILTAEN COULD WANT FOR A MORE *NOBLE* DUTY THAN TO PROTECT ONE OF THE GREAT GATEHOLDS IN THE RING MOUNTAINS

IF A GATE *FALLS*, A PATH LAYS OPEN INTO THE HEART OF ULTHUAN.
SCANT HOURS EARLIER, WHEN WORD CAME THAT THE FORCES OF NAGGAROTH HAD ASSAULTED THE *PHOENIX GATE* MORNAS IDRION SENT THE GREATER PART OF HIS FORCES TO ASSIST IN THE FIGHT

BUT IT WAS A DRUCHII RUSE.
THE *REAL* ATTACK IS HERE.
MALEKITH. ASURYAN PROTECT ME, IT IS MALEKITH HIMSELF
MORE THAN THAT, MORNAS IDRION...

THE *COMBINED* ARMIES OF THE WITCH KING MALEKITH *AND* MALUS DARKBLADE, DRACHAU OF HAG GRAEF.
WAR HYDRAS, MANTICORE AND OTHER OBSCENITIES, GOADED INTO *FERAL RAGE* BY THE BEASTMASTERS OF KARONDKAR.

WAR CARTS, COMMANDED BY DARKBLADE'S LIEUTENANT CHAMPION SILAR THORNBLOOD.
THE GREAT HOSTS OF SPEAR AND SWORD.

THE WITCH KING'S *BLACK GUARD*, LED BY GOURKETH THE SCOURGE.

THE EXECUTIONERS FROM HAR GANETH, CAPTAINED BY THE FEROCIOUS SARKOL NARZA.
AND THE COLD ONE KNIGHTS, THEIR SOUL EATER LANCES GLITTERING IN THEIR HANDS...
...AND MALUS DARKBLADE AT THEIR HEAD.
FOR THE WITCH-KING! SOAK THE GROUND WITH ULTHUAN BLOOD!
THE DRUCHII BEAT THEIR SHIELDS AND BAY-
BANNER OF BLOOD! BANNER OF BLOOD!
BLACK DRAGON FURY BREACHES THE WALLS...

...AND MALUS IS FIRST INSIDE.
SLAUGHTER FOLLOWS.
SARKOL NARZA'S DEATH DEALERS SWEEP IN TO SUPPORT. SPARING NONE.
ALONG THE WALL AT A SECOND BREACH, GOURKETH'S BLACK GUARDSMEN BUTCHER THREE HIGH-BORN CAPTAINS OF ULTHUAN AND THEIR MEN.
THEN, IN THE INNER YARDS, DARKBLADE CLOSES ON MORNAS IDRION, FACE TO FACE.
WITH MY LIFE, I WILL KEEP YOU OUT OF ULTHUAN, DRUCHII SCUM!

YOUR LIFE, ITHILTAEN BASTARD...
...IS NOT NEARLY ENOUGH!
AAAIEEES!
GOURKETH?
THE BATTLE IS DONE, MY LORD MASTER. THE DRAGON GATE IS OURS AND THE SPEARS OF ULTHUAN SHATTERED
A MOMENT TO RELISH, MY CHAMPION.
YOU SEEM TROUBLED?
DARKBLADE MASTER. HE LED THE FIGHT, SWIFT AND SAVAGE. THERE IS NO DOUBTING HIS METTLE.
OR HIS MIND. THIS RUSE WAS HIS IDEA
HE IS MUCH ADMIRED, LORD WITCH KING. THE SIGHT OF HIS BLOODY BANNER LED OUR ARMY THROUGH, AS IF IT INSPIRED THEM MORE THAN-

MORE THAN WHAT, GOURKETH?
MORE THAN ME?
SMAKKK!
WATCH HIM THEN.
MALUS DARKBLADE POSSESSES SUCH SKILLS AS A WARLORD, HE MAY ACTUALLY DELIVER ME VICTORY OVER ULTHUAN.
BUT IN SUCH VICTORY, WOULD HE BE CONTENT TO SERVE ME STILL? OR WOULD HE HAVE YET GREATER AMBITIONS?
WATCH HIM, GOURKETH, AND BE READY
WHILE HE FOLLOWS ME, HE LIVES.
IF HE TURNS AGAINST ME, HE WILL KNOW THE DISPLEASURE OF THE WITCH KING.
NEXT: KNIVES OF NAGGOR

CLONE OF BLOOD

The Dan Abnett Interview

Dan Abnett has been very busy producing oodles of great comic strips for Warhammer Monthly. What with Titan IV, Darkblade IV and the special twenty page Lone Wolves story that appeared last issue, frankly we're being spoiled for choice. Because of his painstaking work and commitment to bringing action, mayhem and excitement to our pages we thought it was high time for a chat and a biscuit. Matt Ralphs poured the tea and asked the questions.

Matt: *Hi Dan, how's it going today?*

Dan: Fine, thank you. Another chunk of Ravenor complete, and another handful of characters mauled and abused. A regular day at the desk of the clones.

Matt: *Ah, yes, Ravenor! We were all very excited here at the BL offices when the first chunk arrived. Can you give us an exclusive in what's going to happen? Not that we're impatient or anything!*

Dan: You don't need to have read the Eisenhorn trilogy to 'get' Ravenor, but if you have you'll find a handful of familiar faces in there – some of Eisenhorn's old warband turning up in the service of Inquisitor Ravenor, who was once Eisenhorn's pupil and is now a full inquisitor in his own right. As far as the story goes, it's following the team as they try to purge an Imperial world of imported Chaos artifacts. It's a sort of 'team book' as opposed to the solo efforts of Eisenhorn and the army level heroics in Gaunt's Ghosts novels.

Matt: *A bit of Mission Impossible, Inside and the A-Team then?*

Dan: I suppose so, but with a very 40K slant. Ravenor is a psychic, but due to terrible injuries he's encased inside a force chair and can't physically interact with the outside world. His team members are his 'body' literally.

Matt: *That's interesting. So he's the brain, and he has to direct his 'body' to do what he cannot. Is he quite a tortured character, considering his condition, or has he adapted well? There is a lot of disability in the 40K universe what with implants and so on. Did you set out to examine the implications of this in detail?*

Dan: Sort of. I didn't create Ravenor with that in mind, though. He was just a support character in Eisenhorn, but once he was there I

found him full of fascinating potential. Writing inquisitor novels allows me to explore more of the civilian, non-military, aspects of the 40K universe, and when I wanted to write more after the Eisenhorn books, Ravenor was a perfect choice, it seemed to me. He's actually very well adjusted. Mind powers of his level are a serious compensation, though of course he does have certain things and opportunities taken from him. But he's not a brooding damaged individual, nor even an intense and hard-nosed one like Eisenhorn. He's quite liberal, sympathetic and wise. Except when it comes to Chaos, naturally.

Matt: *Liberal and sympathetic are not common traits in most 40,000 characters. Do you think it's important to create such characters to add some humanity to this vision of the far future?*

Dan: Yes. The kind of hard-line, unswerving nature of characters both good and bad at the core of the 40K universe is great, and works perfectly in terms of the game where essential antagonisms need to be undisputedly clear and understood. But I think that can get far too 'one note' in novels, especially if everyone's drawing the same dead hard lines. Humans, even humans in an imagined 41st millennium, are complex things. It makes the stories more interesting, more textured and allows for more graduations of plot and twisting surprises. Eisenhorn, after all, was about charting the undercurrent change in a man's outlook. Gaunt is essentially a very sympathetic man (very, very, VERY sympathetic considering he's a commissar). And I've probably described Ravenor too simply anyway. After all, in 40K terms, liberal and sympathetic are synonyms for heretic, blasphemer, dabbler etc.

He's by far and away the most evil lead character I've written.

Matt: *Which adds to the trauma that the characters experience. It's easy to forget that the majority of people in the 41st millennium are average civilians, just trying to get by in a very bad universe. Your ability to draw sympathetic characters is a very useful one. Do you base these characters on real people, or historical people, for instance?*

Dan: Yes, sometimes. Both real people and historical characters suggest things to me. I don't think I've often, if ever, based a character four-square on a 'real' one. But I plunder traits, characteristics, mannerisms and so on and throw them into my patent pending clone-a-tronic indenti-kit character maker. I'm trying desperately to come up with a good example of that, but I can't at the moment. Let's just say it's a very organic process!

Matt: *Organic? Sounds very Nurglesque! I hope your muse is as pure as you think it is! Well, from a liberal character to a very unliberal one, and a particular favourite of mine: Malus Darkblade! He's come a long way since we first met him as an exile. Are you pleased with the way he's integrated himself into the Warhammer world?*

Dan: Completely. It's very gratifying to see material I've produced becoming lore in the game, and in Malus's case, at such an important level! It's terrific! Except he's now so firmly established and 'real' I have to think twice before I do anything with him. I have to ask Malus's permission!

Matt: *So the artist has his creation slightly hijacked! Small price to pay for seeing a model being played on the table, and him actually have a serious effect on the movement of the Warhammer World, I suppose. I think the thick web of intrigue and the political machinations Darkblade instigates really add depth to the way people perceive the dark elves. It's quite Shakespearian. Are you a fan of the bard?*

Dan: I don't think it's any coincidence that Kurosawa's film version of Macbeth was called Throne of Blood. Actually, this goes back to what I was saying about hard line characters being one note. Darkblade is monstrously, unequivocally evil. He's by far and away the most evil lead character I've written. Book after book of that would become wearing, but I didn't want to diminish his evil by adding a touchy feely side. The answer lay in making both the evil and the strip itself more complex. I added intrigue, plot, counter-plot, secret dealings and a larger cast to play those out. Malus is Macbeth and Richard III, gaining and then securing absolute power by intrigue, guile and murder. We'll have to see how long that kind of administration lasts. In human terms, not long. But in dark elf society? He'll probably win an (ig)nobel prize for dagger-use.

Matt: *Darkblade is, as you say, a horribly evil creation, and if that were the only facet to his personality he would be very two-dimensional. However, I think most readers really like him because of his guile and the way he can out-manoeuver the other dark elves. People admire him, as we often admire evil cads and villains. It must be fun to write for him. My favourite line was in part two of Banner of Blood: 'Malus Darkblade, you little bastard!'*

Dan: A sentiment echoed by all who know him. He is fun, and it is entertaining to have him just outplay everyone else with sheer chutzpah. Malekith might have something to say about that, eventually.

Matt: *I'm sure he will! Titan: Omnissiah is coming on very nicely. It's a real step beyond the usual strips we do. It has a strong Jules Verne 'new and dangerous world' edge to it. Was it fun to mess with the formula like that by actually taking the crew out of Dictatia?*

The Word of Dan

Dan's work for the Black Library spans short stories, comic strips and novels. Here are just a few of his most recent titles.

The Gaunt's Ghosts Omnibus

Ravenor – due Feb '04

Dan tackles Kislev

Just some of Dan's fabulous graphic novels

Dan: Very much. Again, it was an attempt to play around with the linear stompy-death-kill of the strip as it stood. I thought one of the most fun episodes early on was the one inside the Titan with Dorn trying to fight the tyranid. It's a change of perspective. It means all bets are off.

Matt: *Anthony Williams unusual art style in Titan: Omnissiah really adds to the surreal, unsettling quality to your story. Did you work closely with him on the look, or did you let him get on with it?*

Dan: It depends. I've worked with Ant for many years now, and he's so hardworking and professional you can simply give him the basics, a few suggestions and watch him go. Once in a while, however, I get specific. I make key specific references or suggestions as to how things look in my mind. It's a springboard really, what he does with my hints may not necessarily come back the way I saw it, but it always works. It's always great to see how he develops things.

Matt: *Did you have any idea that at one point he was planning on using offal as a background for some of the panels?*

Dan: No one expects anyone ever to use offal as a background!

Matt: *I guess not. Inquisitor Ascendant: Book III is being awaited with bated breath. Considering that Grovier is, for all intents and purposes, dead, why did you decide to do a further strip?*

Dan: Because the story wasn't finished. Closure was needed, though Simon and I didn't realise how much closure until we got started on the story.

Matt: *Everything you do is eagerly awaited then pored over by your many readers. Do you feel any pressure to 'get it right' for them, or do you write for yourself and if other people love it, so much the better?*

Dan: That's hard to say, really. Essentially, I've always written for myself, in as much that if I don't like something I figure no one else will. Certainly the novels now – Ravenor and the next Gaunt, for example – are driven by stories that I have a hankering to tell because I think they're exciting. But, I'm also very aware that people are reading and expecting certain things. I always try to think myself into the position of 'I've done this and that and the readers liked it, so what can I give them now?' Editorial comment is vital, it's the first line of defense in terms of keeping quality up. And a certain amount of pressure is always good. It stops you getting lazy. Helps you keep deadlines. Keeps the clones in a job.

Matt: *Just for the record, which clone am I speaking to at the moment?*

Dan: Only the prime archetype is allowed to make contact with the outside world. I sounded like a Dr Who villain then, didn't I?

...he's so hardworking and professional you can simply give him the basics, a few suggestions and watch him go.

Matt: *Your writing style changes seamlessly, from punchy comic strips to epic war in space to mystery and intrigue with the Eisenhorn trilogy. Do you write in different ways to keep things fresh? And do you find some styles more difficult to write than others?*

Dan: I mix it up for diversity in the output, yes, but also for myself. A change can be refreshing. I've always been a bit odd that way, writing The Punisher one day and Mr Men the next. I've yet to attempt a style that's really defeated me (I think... I hope!), although on a few occasions I've said that the choice to make the Eisenhorn books first person made them demanding to stay in control of.

Matt: *I imagine writing first person to be quite a challenge. You lose other peoples' perspectives and the main character has got to be convincing!*

Dan: That was it exactly. Keeping a handle on the arc Eisenhorn's character was charting was fairly straightforward, and after all, any inconsistencies (deliberate or otherwise) can be directly attributed to his humans failing, not mine. But it was making sure the story stayed fresh, exciting and relevant, all from one point of view, especially when the plot involved many people across the Imperium. That was tough. Eisenhorn couldn't be everywhere or see everything. If nothing else, that would become totally convenient and unconvincing. Nor did I just want people coming in telling him whole swathes of plot (Basil Exposition). I think it was a success in the end, but it did give me a few headaches making it work.

Matt: *Tell us a little about Mr Abnett's working environment. Is it a huge office filled with Dan clones and dusty books? Or are you locked in the Black Library dungeon with nothing but a typewriter?*

Dan: It's a vast silo, filled with pallid clones tapping away at codifiers like something out of the film Brazil... No, actually. I work in my basement. I've got an office there with a desk, a chair, an iMac and a vast quantity of books, comics and oddments.

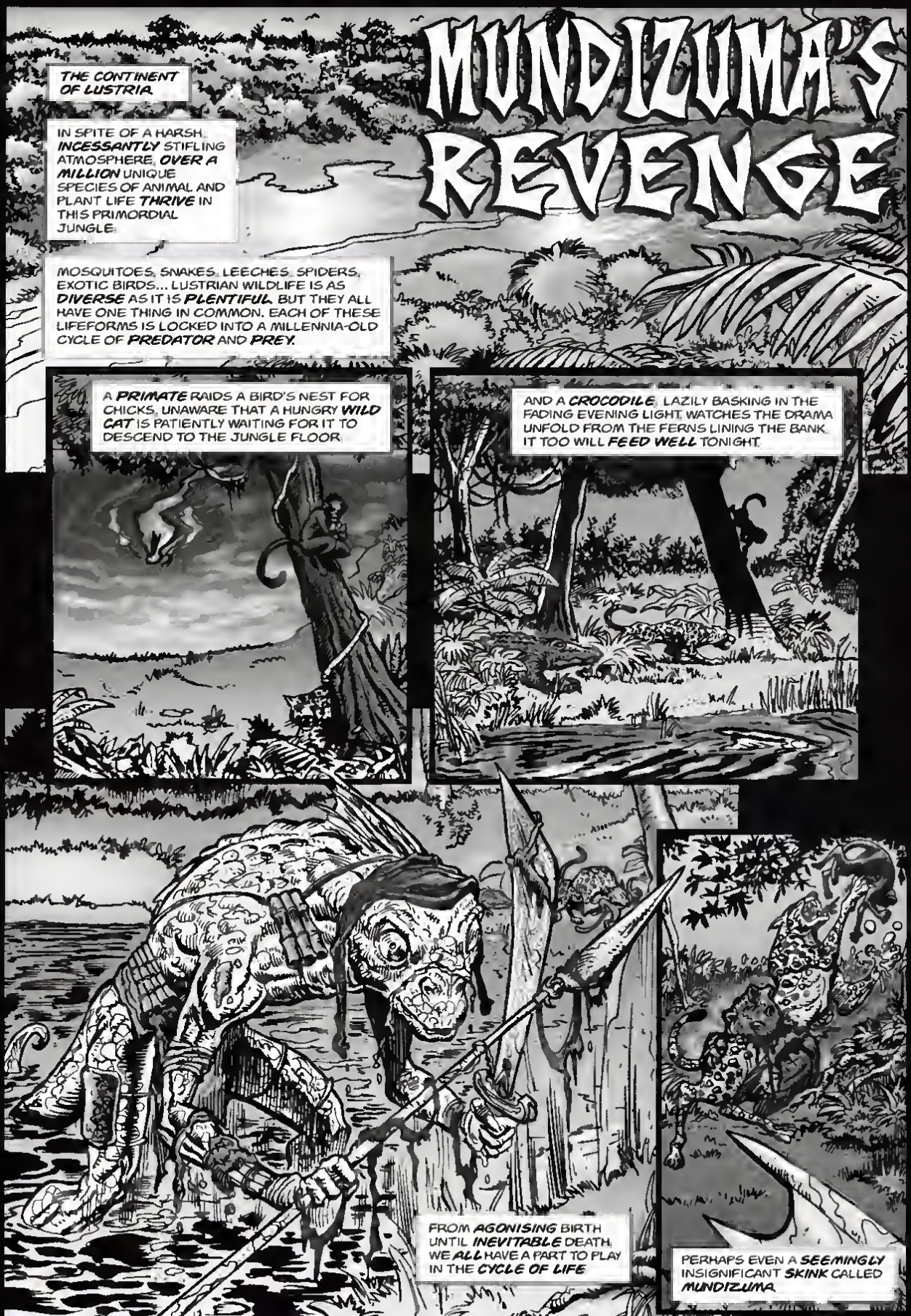
Matt: *To finish off, what do you do to relax and forget about death, war, intrigue and deadlines?*

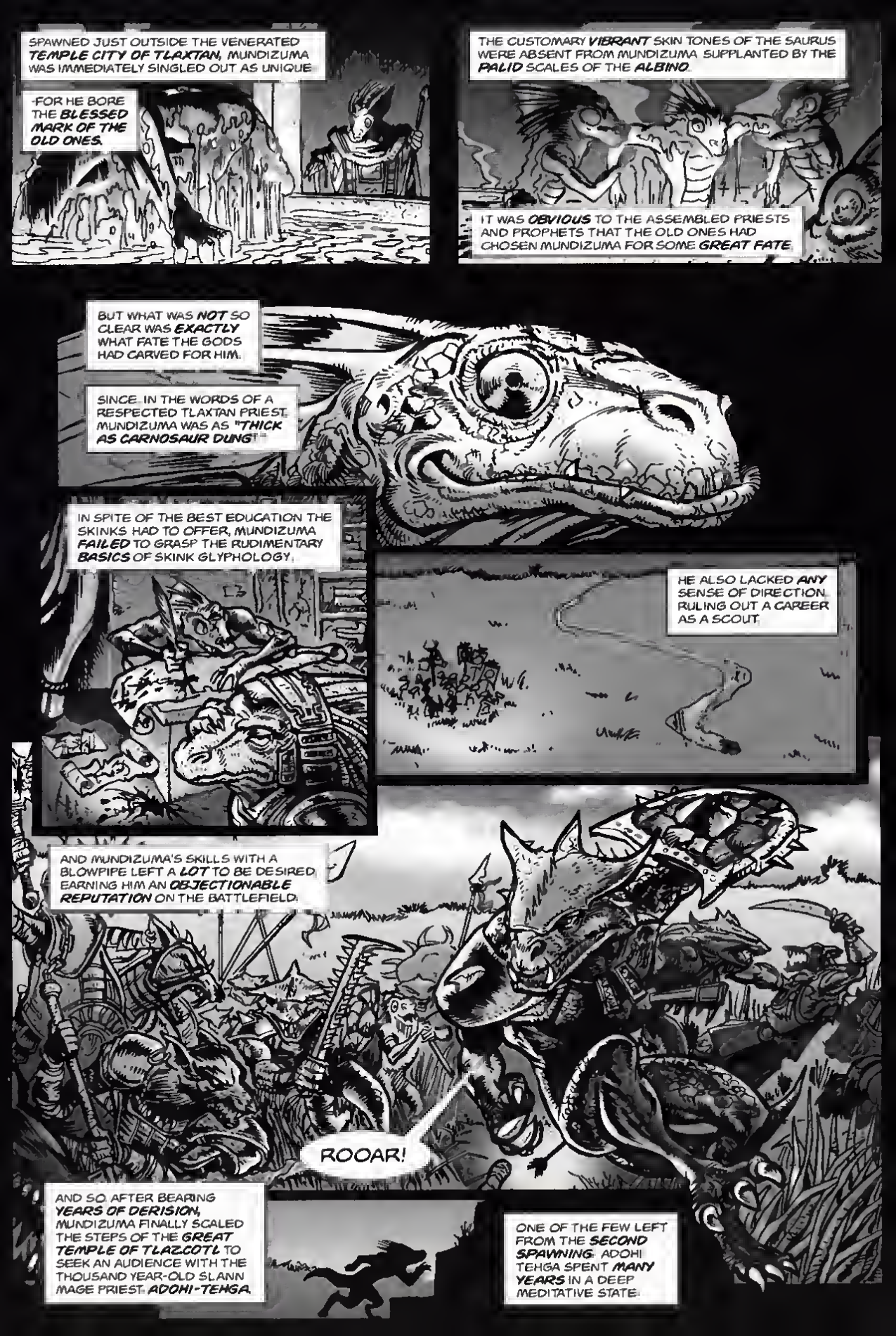
Dan: I read, watch movies, documentaries, some TV shows (I have a terrible addiction to Buffy, The West Wing and worst of all, a particular Aussie soap), play with the cats and the kids, cook, play the guitar, listen to music, the normal human-type things. Oh, and I make sure the clones go through the sheep dip once a week.

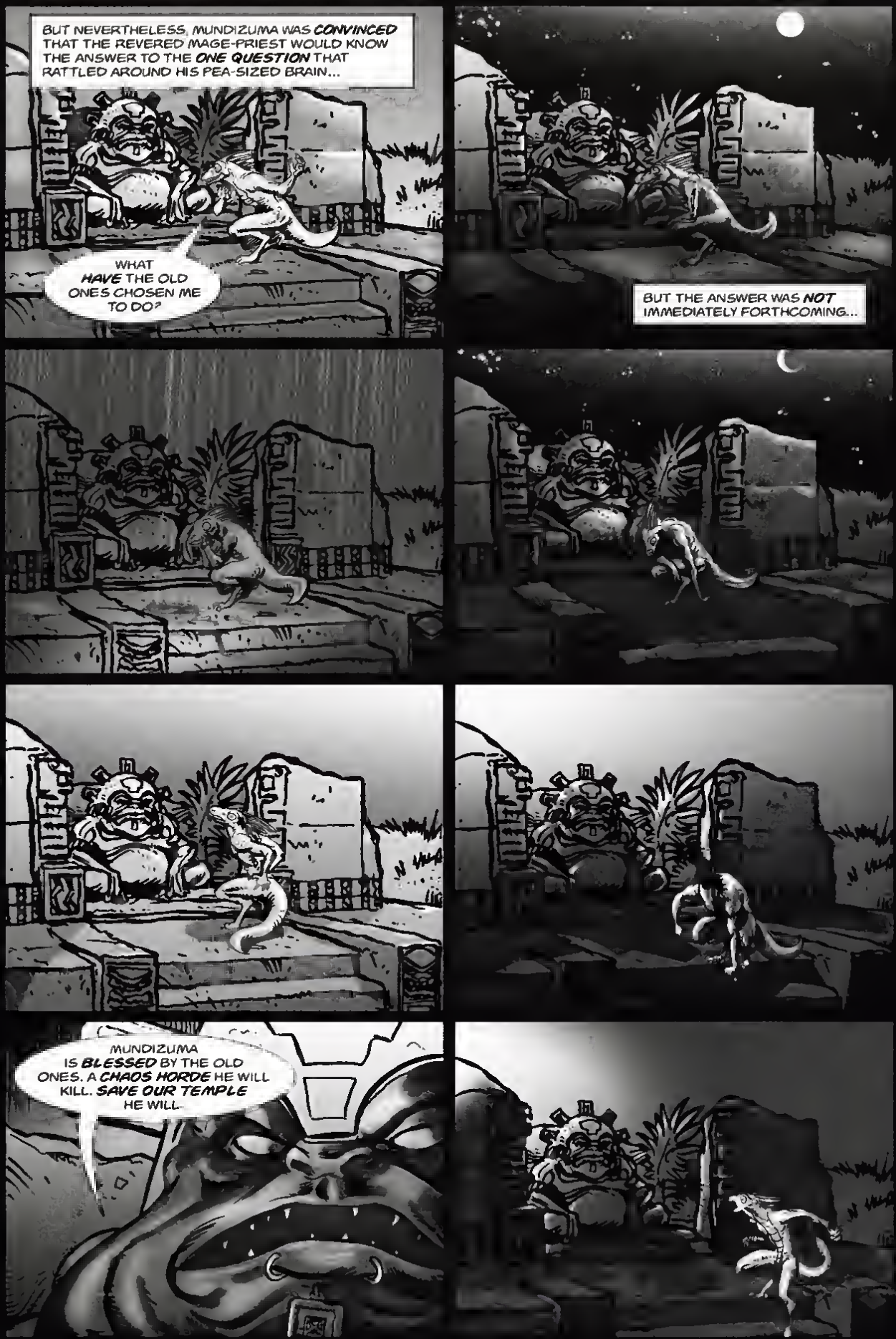
Matt: *That's great! Thanks for your time, Dan.*

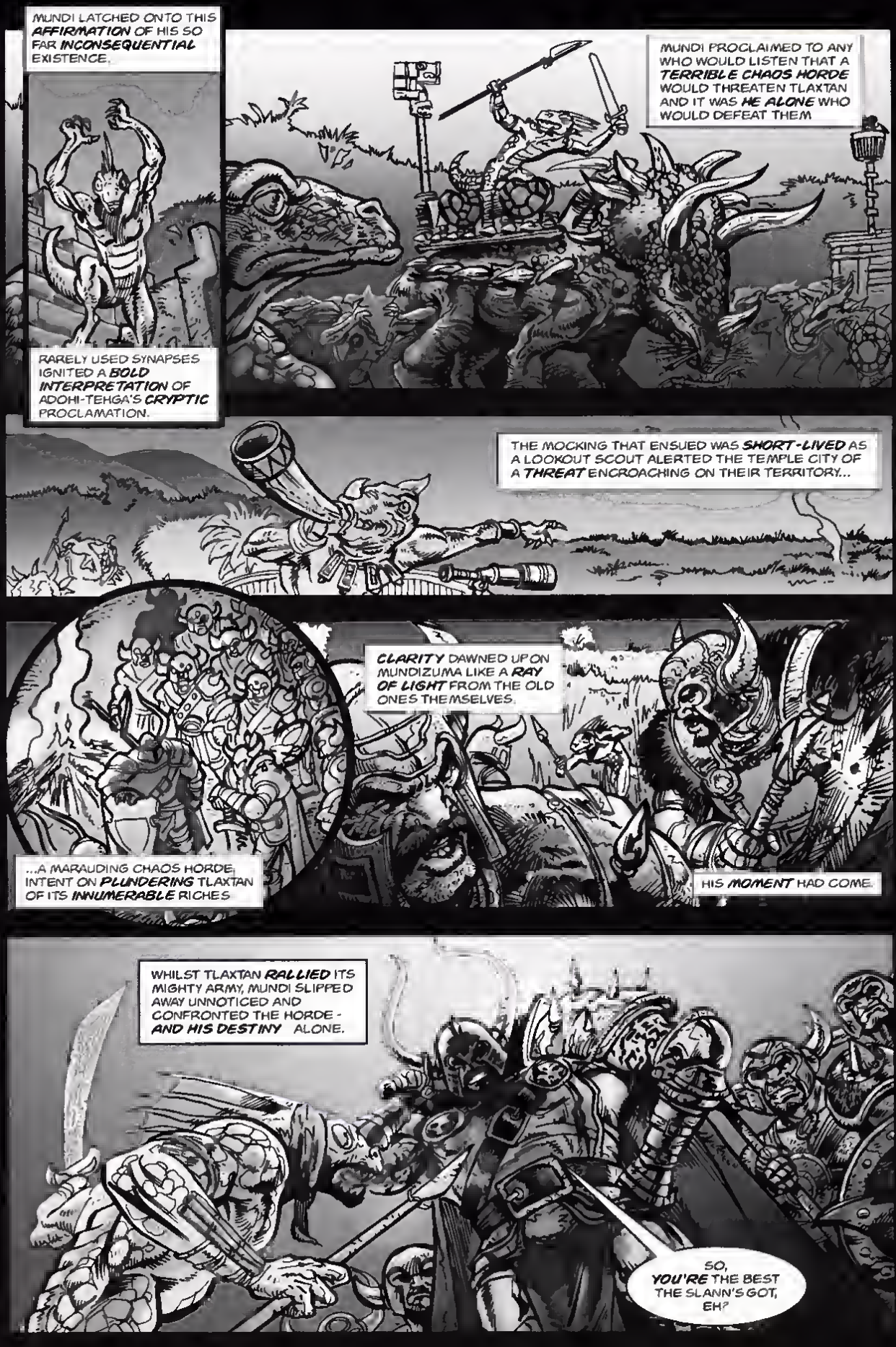
Dan: No problem. Any time. Thanks, Matt.

Hears to the clone: this picture is so good we had to print it again.

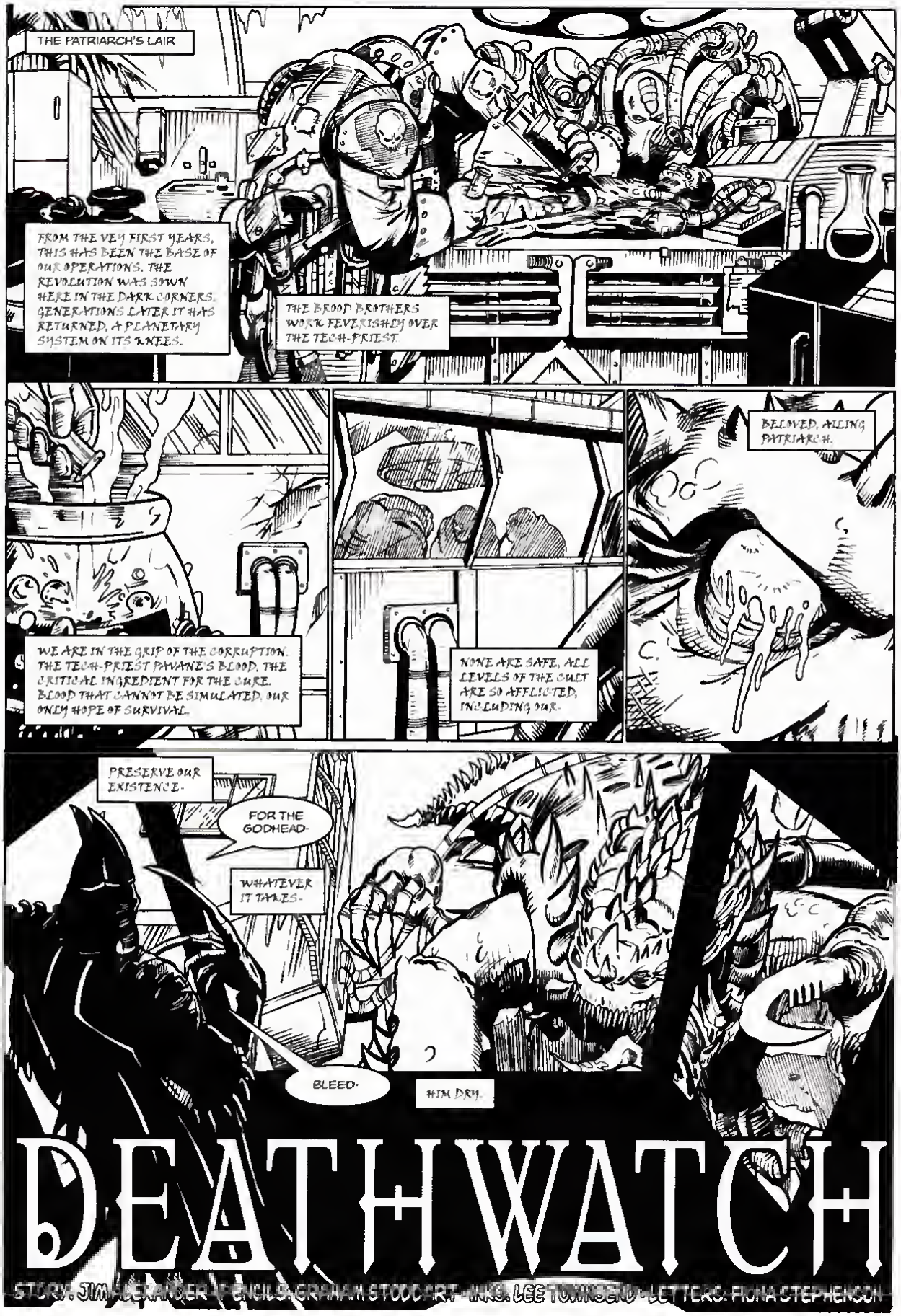

MUNDIZUMA'S REVENGE
THE CONTINENT OF LUSTRIA.
IN SPITE OF A HARSH, INCESSANTLY STIFLING ATMOSPHERE, OVER A MILLION UNIQUE SPECIES OF ANIMAL AND PLANT LIFE THRIVE IN THIS PRIMORDIAL JUNGLE.
MOSQUITOES, SNAKES, LEECHES, SPIDERS, EXOTIC BIRDS... LUSTRIAN WILDLIFE IS AS DIVERSE AS IT IS PLENTIFUL. BUT THEY ALL HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON. EACH OF THESE LIFEFORMS IS LOCKED INTO A MILLENNIA-OLD CYCLE OF PREDATOR AND PREY.
A PRIMATE RAIDS A BIRD'S NEST FOR CHICKS, UNAWARE THAT A HUNGRY WILD CAT IS PATIENTLY WAITING FOR IT TO DESCEND TO THE JUNGLE FLOOR.
AND A CROCODILE, LAZILY BASKING IN THE FADING EVENING LIGHT, WATCHES THE DRAMA UNFOLD FROM THE FERNS LINING THE BANK. IT TOO WILL FEED WELL TONIGHT.
FROM AGONISING BIRTH UNTIL INEVITABLE DEATH, WE ALL HAVE A PART TO PLAY IN THE CYCLE OF LIFE
PERHAPS EVEN A SEEMINGLY INSIGNIFICANT SKINK CALLED MUNDIZUMA.
STORY: STU TAYLOR • ART: MIKE COLLINS • LETTERS: FIONA STEPHENSON


SPAWNED JUST OUTSIDE THE VENERATED TEMPLE CITY OF TLAXTAN, MUNDIZUMA WAS IMMEDIATELY SINGLED OUT AS UNIQUE.
FOR HE BORE THE BLESSED MARK OF THE OLD ONES.
THE CUSTOMARY VIBRANT SKIN TONES OF THE SAURUS WERE ABSENT FROM MUNDIZUMA, SUPPLANTED BY THE PALID SCALES OF THE ALBINO.
IT WAS OBVIOUS TO THE ASSEMBLED PRIESTS AND PROPHETS THAT THE OLD ONES HAD CHOSEN MUNDIZUMA FOR SOME GREAT FATE.
BUT WHAT WAS NOT SO CLEAR WAS EXACTLY WHAT FATE THE GODS HAD CARVED FOR HIM.
SINCE, IN THE WORDS OF A RESPECTED TLAXTAN PRIEST, MUNDIZUMA WAS AS "THICK AS CARNOSAUR DUNG!"
IN SPITE OF THE BEST EDUCATION THE SKINKS HAD TO OFFER, MUNDIZUMA FAILED TO GRASP THE RUDIMENTARY BASICS OF SKINK GLYPHOLOGY.
HE ALSO LACKED ANY SENSE OF DIRECTION, RULING OUT A CAREER AS A SCOUT.
AND MUNDIZUMA'S SKILLS WITH A BLOWPIPE LEFT A LOT TO BE DESIRED, EARNING HIM AN OBJECTIONABLE REPUTATION ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
ROOAR!
AND SO, AFTER BEARING YEARS OF DERISION, MUNDIZUMA FINALLY SCALED THE STEPS OF THE GREAT TEMPLE OF TLAZCOTL TO SEEK AN AUDIENCE WITH THE THOUSAND YEAR-OLD SLANN MAGE PRIEST, ADOHI-TEHGA.
ONE OF THE FEW LEFT FROM THE SECOND SPAWNING, ADOHI TEHGA SPENT MANY YEARS IN A DEEP MEDITATIVE STATE.


BUT NEVERTHELESS, MUNDIZUMA WAS CONVINCED THAT THE REVERED MAGE-PRIEST WOULD KNOW THE ANSWER TO THE ONE QUESTION THAT RATTLED AROUND HIS PEA-SIZED BRAIN...
WHAT HAVE THE OLD ONES CHOSEN ME TO DO?
BUT THE ANSWER WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY FORTHCOMING...
MUNDIZUMA IS BLESSED BY THE OLD ONES. A CHAOS HORDE HE WILL KILL. SAVE OUR TEMPLE HE WILL.


MUNDI LATCHED ONTO THIS AFFIRMATION OF HIS SO FAR INCONSEQUENTIAL EXISTENCE.
RARELY USED SYNAPSES IGNITED A BOLD INTERPRETATION OF ADOHI-TEHGA'S CRYPTIC PROCLAMATION.
MUNDI PROCLAIMED TO ANY WHO WOULD LISTEN THAT A TERRIBLE CHAOS HORDE WOULD THREATEN TLAXTAN AND IT WAS HE ALONE WHO WOULD DEFEAT THEM
THE MOCKING THAT ENSUED WAS SHORT-LIVED AS A LOOKOUT SCOUT ALERTED THE TEMPLE CITY OF A THREAT ENCROACHING ON THEIR TERRITORY...
...A MARAUDING CHAOS HORDE, INTENT ON PLUNDERING TLAXTAN OF ITS INNUMERABLE RICHES
CLARITY DAWNED UP ON MUNDIZUMA LIKE A RAY OF LIGHT FROM THE OLD ONES THEMSELVES.
HIS MOMENT HAD COME.
WHILST TLAXTAN RALLIED ITS MIGHTY ARMY, MUNDI SLIPPED AWAY UNNOTICED AND CONFRONTED THE HORDE - AND HIS DESTINY ALONE.
SO, YOU'RE THE BEST THE SLANN'S GOT, EH?

SADLY, MUNDIZUMA'S LAST THOUGHT WAS THAT MAYBE HE MIGHT HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD ADOHI-TEHGA'S PROPHECY.
SKRRR


THE PATRIARCH'S LAIR
FROM THE VERY FIRST YEARS, THIS HAS BEEN THE BASE OF OUR OPERATIONS. THE REVOLUTION WAS SOWN HERE IN THE DARK CORNERS. GENERATIONS LATER IT HAS RETURNED, A PLANETARY SYSTEM ON ITS KNEES.
THE BROOD BROTHERS WORK FEVERISHLY OVER THE TECH-PRIEST.
WE ARE IN THE GRIP OF THE CORRUPTION. THE TECH-PRIEST PAVANE'S BLOOD, THE CRITICAL INGREDIENT FOR THE CURE. BLOOD THAT CANNOT BE SIMULATED. OUR ONLY HOPE OF SURVIVAL.
NONE ARE SAFE, ALL LEVELS OF THE CULT ARE SO AFFLICTED, INCLUDING OUR-
BELOVED, AILING PATRIARCH.
PRESERVE OUR EXISTENCE-
FOR THE GODHEAD-
WHATEVER IT TAKES-
BLEED-
HIM DRY.
DEATHWATCH
STORY: JIM ALEXANDER • PENCILS: GRAHAM STOUD • ART: INKS: LEE TOWNSEND • LETTERS: FIONA STEPHENSON

NEARBY
THE DISEASE HAS *RIPPED A HOLE* THROUGH IT, TURNED IT INSIDE OUT.
THE FIRST GENESTEALER - THE *PATRIARCH* - WAS INFECTED BY THE FIRST ACOLYTE IT TOOK.
A PERFECT PLAN, BUT FOR THE FACT IT WASN'T THE ARRIVAL AND SUBSEQUENT ABSORPTION BY THE *TYRANID FLEET* THAT SET OFF THE CORRUPTION.
IT *WAS* THE *CULT* ITSELF ON REACHING DOMINANCE - ON REALISING ITS *KEENING* CALL.
THE HAIRLINE *TRIGGER* THAT ACTIVATED THE DISEASE WAS JUST THAT, TOO...
SENSITIVE
WE'LL KNOW BETTER FOR NEXT TIME.
NEXT TIME, INQUISITOR?"
YOU AND YOUR PREDECESSORS ORCHESTRATED THIS - BROUGHT EVERYTHING TOGETHER. EVEN THE *PATRIARCH* - YOU ALLOWED IT TO COME *HERE*. YOU DIDN'T INTERVENE.
BLIND AMBITION SAW YOU TAKE CONTROL OF THE *TYRANID DIRECTIVE*. YOUR SEVERED HEAD WILL ROLL THROUGH THE CORRIDORS OF THE *ORDO XENOS* AT ITS FAILURE!
ENOUGH OF THIS! YOU ARE STILL UNDER MY *COMMAND*, JERRON... *RESUME* YOUR DUTY.
WE HAVE COMPANY

THE BULWARK.
nyaa...
IN THE GREAT BATTLE OF TEN THOUSAND DEAD...
...I WAS THE ONLY MAN STANDING.
SO I CRIED OUT MY NAME IN THANKS TO THE EMPEROR AND SWORE I WOULD NOT SPEAK IT AGAIN.
NOT UNTIL MY TIME HAS COME AND MY SPIRIT FREE OF THIS MORTAL SHELL, WOULD SOAR AND CLIMB THE STEPS OF THE GOLDEN THRONE
FOR HIS IS THE LIGHT
WHAT KEPT YOU?
DART!
CLATTER!
FROM A SIDE APERTURE - ACTIVATED AS SOON AS YOU ENTERED THE ROOM.
PARALYSIS IS INSTANT.
IT IS YOUR TIME, DARK ANGEL.
NUU...

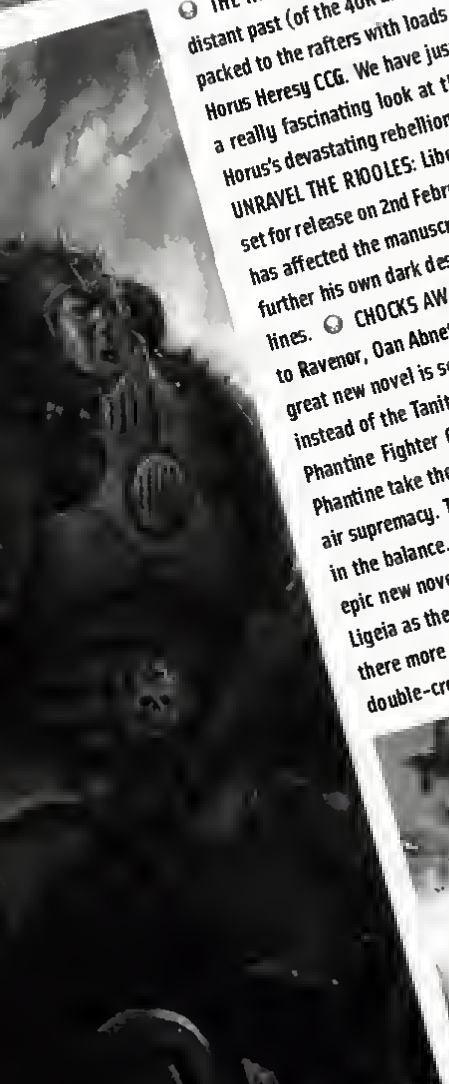
CLEANSE YOURSELF!
WONDERFUL ROOM, IS IT NOT? HERE, I'M IN CONTROL. HERE, THE HIDDEN CAMERAS AND TRACKING SENSORS ALL AROUND THIS SECTOR ARE MY EYES AND EARS
HOWEVER, ON THING EVEN I DON'T KNOW...
NOW YOU'RE ABOUT TO MEET YOUR FALSE EMPEROR, ONE LAST SUPREME EFFORT - WHISPER IT TO ME...
...TELL ME YOUR NAME.
nuuh...
uh...?
KRAKK!

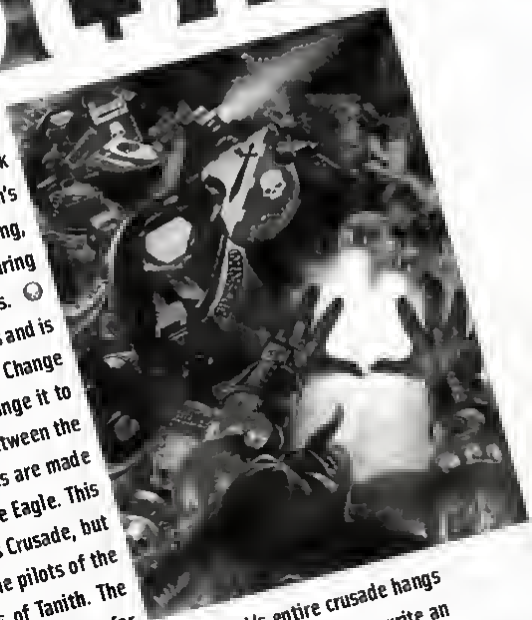
I can't move.
YOUR BOLTGUN WAS SMELTED FROM THE VOLCANIC FIRES OF YOUR HOMEWORLD, TO USE IT AGAINST SUCH AS ME - THE SHAME YOU WOULD PLACE ON YOUR PEOPLE.
WE CAN'T HELP YOU NOW. IT'S UP TO YOU.
NO MATTER WHAT THE CULT HAS DONE TO YOU, YOU ARE DEATHWATCH! THERE MUST STILL BE SOME EMBER, HOWEVER FADING, OF ASTARTES WITHIN YOU!
I KNOW I'M GETTING THROUGH TO THAT PART OF YOU.
YARRGH!
VENTERS...
BLAM

BLAM
BLAM
NO!
NOW, JERRON... EXPLAIN YOURSELF!
SOMETHING- SOMEONE- CLAWING AT, FLOODING MY MIND,
BLAM
BLAM
SKEEE
'BUT IT'S GONE NOW.'
CORRUPT... ARGGH...
GUHH...
GUHH...
GAHH...

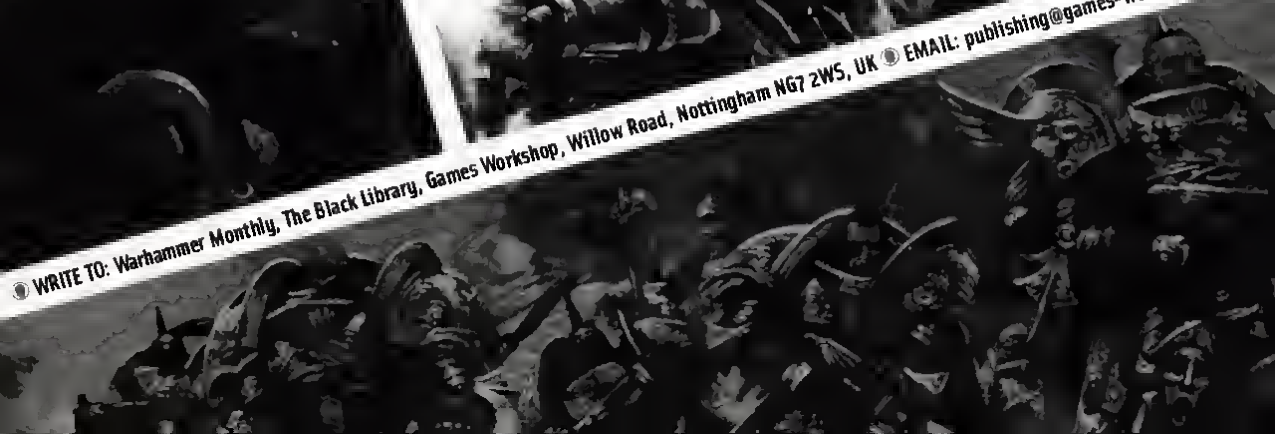
NONE OF THEIR DEATHS WILL BE IN VAIN. NOW...
...THE MATTER AT HAND!
INQUISITOR GO GET YOUR TECH-PRIEST.
I'LL STAND MY GROUND.
KREEEEEE!
TO BE CONCLUDED

NECRONOMICON





THE HERESY BEGINS: For those of you interested in the dim and distant past (of the 40K universe) the Black Library is releasing a book packed to the rafters with loads of stunning artwork from Sabertooth's Horus Heresy CCG. We have just received the artwork and it's amazing, a really fascinating look at the grim, dark future, before and during Horus's devastating rebellion. Keep 'em peeled for further updates. UNRAVEL THE RIDDLES: Liber Chaotica: Tzeentch is at the printers and is set for release on 2nd February. We do not know how the Lord of Change has affected the manuscript, but we are sure that he will change it to further his own dark designs... You would do well to read between the lines. CHOCKS AWAY!: As soon as the finishing touches are made to Ravenor, Dan Abnett will start on his next novel, Double Eagle. This great new novel is set during the massive Sabbat Worlds Crusade, but instead of the Tanith First features the adventures of the pilots of the Phantine Fighter Corps, a unit introduced in the Guns of Tanith. The Phantine take their beloved Thunderbolts aloft in a desperate fight for air supremacy. The Battle of Enothis has begun and the fate of Warmaster Macaroth's entire crusade hangs in the balance... PURGE THE GALAXY: Soul Drinker's author Ben Counter has just signed up to write an epic new novel about the Ordo Malleus daemonhunters. Grey Knights follows Justicar Alaric and Inquisitor Ligeia as they try to stop a terrible and manipulative daemon from manifesting itself into the world. But is there more going on behind the scenes – who is really pulling the strings? Expect mystery, subterfuge and double-crosses in this exciting novel. THAT'S IT FOR THIS MONTH. ISSUE #78 ON SALE 5 FEBRUARY 2004.



WRITE TO: Warhammer Monthly, The Black Library, Games Workshop, Willow Road, Nottingham NG7 2WS, UK EMAIL: publishing@games-workshop.co.uk

DARKBLADE

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It is the 41st Millennium.

There is only War.

You are Kais, a Fire Warrior.

The next 24 hours will be hell.

WARHAMMER 40000 FIRE WARRIOR

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SCANNED BY: WETH'L-DCP
EDITED BY: ZOMBIETOASTER